

# We need a review into inequality, but it must be done b...

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*I am a signatory to this letter in the [Guardian](#) this morning questioning whether the IFS has asked the right people with the right balance of views and experience to review inequality in the UK:*

*We welcome the idea of a major review of inequality ([Britain 'risks heading to US levels of inequality'](#), 14 May). With Brexit looming and recent analyses linking income inequality to voting for rightwing populists, mass shootings, mental ill health, status consumerism and domestic violence, this is indeed a critical issue for our times.*

*However, there is widespread concern about the composition of this review's "expert panel", which has a majority of white economists. Although the panel includes an expert on health inequalities, none of the world's leading experts on the health and psychosocial effects of income inequality itself are included, nor is there expertise in the spatial aspects of inequality. And there is a conspicuous absence of world-leading economists for whom income inequality is their primary focus — no Piketty, no Stiglitz, no Galbraith, no Frank, no Fitoussi, no Palma, no Chang, no Milanovic. Sir Angus Deaton, leading the review, [stated in the journal Science in 2014 that he "get\[s\] angry"](#) about the theory that inequality has psychological and social effects on health — perhaps he has changed his mind now that his own research has uncovered rising deaths from addiction and suicide in the US, but there are many researchers with much greater depth in this area. Even more troubling, there is no ethnic minority representation on the "expert panel", no people with lived experience of inequality, no representatives of charities, trade unions or other NGOs. The number of disciplines represented is also small, although the impact of inequality goes far beyond economics.*

*We, and others, have been researching, educating and campaigning on inequality for many years, we understand the issues and we know what needs to be done. We cannot wait five years for a report from a worryingly elitist review. Getting policymakers and politicians to tackle inequality will require grassroots support from those most affected and is needed urgently.*

**Kate Pickett Professor of epidemiology and research champion for justice and**

**Equality University of York** *Emeritus professor of social epidemiology, University of Nottingham*  
**Barry Dorling** *Harold Mackinder professor of geography, University of Oxford*  
**Pim de Graaf** *Professor of economic geography, University of Groningen*  
**Guy Standing** *Professor of development studies, Soas, University of London*  
**Giovanni Antonucci** *School of social policy, University of Birmingham*  
**Roberto De Vogli** *Associate professor, department of development and social psychology, and Human Rights Centre, University of Padua*  
**Paul C Sutton** *Professor of geography and the environment (PRIME), University of Denver*  
**Susan Himmelweit** *Emeritus professor of economics, Open University, Women's Budget Group*  
**Dr Joanne Montgomery** *Reader in international political economy, King's College London*  
**Professor John Parker** *Professor emeritus, Soas, University of London*  
**Dirk Philipsen** *Associate research professor of economic history, Duke University*  
**Dr Mary Ann Stephenson** *Emeritus professor of development studies, University of Leeds, and management committee, Women's Budget Group*  
**Dr Andrea Westra** *Senior visiting fellow, Open University, and Commissioner for Sustainable Equality*  
**Professor Paul Blackman** *Professor of law, University of York*  
**Rev Pauline McIlrath** *Founder, Taxpayers Against Poverty*  
**Michael Pitson** *Associate professor of management, global sustainability, and social entrepreneurship, Fordham University*  
**Louka Katseli** *Professor of economics, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, and co-chair of the Independent Commission on Sustainable Equality, Progressive Society*  
**EqHasya Stringer** *Professor of environment and development, University of Leeds*  
**Jutta K Steinberger** *Professor of social ecology and ecological economics, University of Leeds*  
**Professor Lynne Trussell** *President, Natural Capitalism Solutions*  
**Jonathan Bhadra** *Professor emeritus of social policy, National University of Singapore, VCs chair in public policy, National University of South Australia*  
**James Ward** *Associate professor, School of natural and built environments, University of South Australia*  
**Jim Doran** *Professor of health policy, University of York*  
**Mr Ken Chivers** *Adjunct research fellow, Central Queensland University*  
**Mary Anne Mercer** *Senior lecturer emerita, Department of Global Health, University of Washington*  
**Dr Stephen Bezruchka** *Senior lecturer in health services and global health, University of Washington*  
**Professor Birgowanski** *Professor of cities, Newcastle University*  
**Ida Kubiszewski** *Associate professor in public policy, Australian National University*  
**Rev Skedras** *Professor of sociology, University of Lancaster*  
**Rowland Atkinson** *Research chair in inclusive societies, University of Sheffield*  
**Krista Vala RagnarsdÃ³ttir** *Professor of sustainability science, University of Iceland*  
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**Jacqueline McGlade** *Professor of resilience and sustainable development, University College London*  
**Samuel Morrison** *Trustee, Tax Watch*  
**Nick Meynen** *Policy officer for environmental and economic justice, European Environmental Bureau*